THE WORST WOMAN IN FICTION.

COUSIN BETTE.

COUSIN BETTE. By HONORE DE BALZAC. Trans-lated by KATHARINE PRESCOTT WORMELEY. 12mo, pp. 557. Roberts Brothers.

Taine has said that Balzac dissected human nie with the feeling of a naturalist, being only concerned to get at and to set down the actual facts, and treating good and evil with the same calm scientific impartiality. "He is," said the critic, "interested in it for itself, in all its manifestations, in all its gradations, he loves it: he only demands to watch its movements under every aspect." M. Taine thought that because of this large point of view Balzae was inevitably concerned in a special way with the analysis of typical subjects and with the observation of those striking social phenomena from which general laws might be deduced. eyes," he continues, " a tond is not less interesting than a butterfly; a but atracts him as strongly as a nightingale." "Cousin Bette" is an example of this tendency. One of the most powerful and sombre of social tragedies, written with Balzac's most concentrated energy and force, full of figures whose lifelikeness is unapproachably realistic, it is at the same time in a marked and special manner a study of typical influences, carried forward and wrought out with that unswerving. passionless, pitiless fidelity to human nature and uman weakness which gives to so many of this great writer's works an impression as of the tread of destiny.

It has been said that Balzac dealt by preference with great passions. It might also have been said that, in dealing with great passions, the breadth of his general view, the extent of his canvas, the intense vividness of his colors, and the latent sense which he conveys to his readers of some awful dominant influence bearing down all or position and steadily pushing its appointed victims to the end assigned, he produces that impression of dark, implacable Fate, which constitutes the atmosphere and the fascination of Greek tragedy. Yet his methods are entirely modern. The tremendous ultimate catastrophes which whelm his sinners affect us so powerfully for the reason that they are never fortuitous. We are shown the whole process of degradation which leads to the climax. We are made to understand how evil habit grows, expands, absorbs more and more of the nature, creeps up like a slowly rising flood about the victim, extinguishes his or her good elements one by one, and finally takes possession of, and in so doing rather than the second of whole being. No such appalling application of this method has ever been made as in Balzac's this method has ever been made as in Balzac's this method has ever been made as in Balzac's the second of Baron Hulot d'Ervy. This man is introduced by the second of the takes possession of, and in so doing ruins, the duced to us prosperous, flourishing, full of honors and emoluments, blessed in his family, with every opportunity and incentive to noble living. But he bors the vice of sensuality, and it proves a deadly, ineradicable disease. Step by step he goes cious and elaborate analysis of the "Sonnets," down. He betrays his wife, impoverishes his undertaken for the purpose of demonstrating the children, sacrifices his relatives; he loses self-re- errors of all former commentators in the inter- least of all perhaps the author himself, for he has in entitled it "Vagrom Verse," spect; his sense of honor becomes dulled; he robs pretation of this body of poetry. Mr. Massey the State, is forced to relinquish all his appointments, sinks lower and lower. Age but intensitemperament." He grows wholly shameless, ani- ure of all the earlier Shakespearean scholars to malized, brutal. And his end, how frightful! comprehend their true genesis. Regarded as A weaker artist than Balzac would have held his purely personal expressions of the poet, it has thenceforward reformed and lived quietly at home. support whatever in authenticated biographical blocked all the avenues by which curative agencies plausible explanation of the "Sonnets" on the Hulot's final infamy is the necessary sequence of all that preceded it. The wretch had ceased to plain significance of contemporary tectimony by was dead. He had sacrificed every one and everything to his vice. He ended by the surrender of his last grain of manhood.

There are three lines of typical study in " Cousin piece of work, repulsive, no doubt, but not the ashamed, and with whom it is required of the moreover, the Marneffe is only an instrument in way and that, even when she thinks that she is directing events. Her tendencies and instincts are all evil, no doubt. Such women as Josepha are saints in comparison with her. She is the incarnation of perfidy, as may be seen in the audacious playing off of her lovers, one against the other. She is also rapacity personified, though that limitless greed of gain she shares with the whole class of demi-mondaines. But bad and vile as the Marneffe appears, she is, after all is said, less startling, less completely sinister a character than the dreadful creature who gives her name to the book. Cousin Bette Is, we are inclined to consider, the worst woman Her nature-far stronger than that of Valerie Marneffe-is not vulgarly wieked; it is essentially diabolical. She is a woman in whom the natural forces and emotions, diverted from their normal employments, have all been concentrated upon the fruition of a hate as implacable and persistent as it is without justifi-

cation. In the coarse peasant nature, the contrasts of accident and fortune have long rankled. Brought up with Adeline, the future wife of Baron Hulot, Bette has been subjected constantly to the humili ation of being used as a foil to the beauty. Adeline makes a great marriage. Bette remains an obscure peasant. The attempts of the Hulots to find her a husband only exasperate her more. She knows she is not prepossessing, and she rages against the fact. She hates Adeline for her beauty, for her piety, for her purity, for her husband. She hates her especially because Adeline is good and she berself is evil-minded. But this hatred, which fills her whole being and dominates her life, is entertained in a cold-blocded, deliberate, latent manner, which is peculiarly horrible. The ingrained vice of Bette is shown in her friendship for the Marneffe. Without passion herself, nevertheless derives strong enjoyment from the contemplation of its effects in her friend. This is the true diabolic character; the soul that loves evil for evil's sake. The Marneffe, when on her fearful death-bed, has a certain drawing toward spiritual things, and begins to talk of making her peace with Heaven. Where-upon Bette murmurs: "She is out of her head!" When Valerie, ashamed to seem repentant, suggests that after all, in pretending remorse, she is only "practising her last seduction,"-the grim Lorrainer exclaims joyously-" There I recognize my Valerie again!

With what cold, patient, pitiless malice she pursues the Hulots from beginning to end! Treachery with her becomes a more commonplace instrumentality, and mendacity the first principle of social intercourse. How placidly she passes from the Marneffe to Adeline and Horhow deliberately and coolly she lays her how thoroughly she plays the hypocrite times! She is never exposed. Nemesis overtakes the Marneffe and includes Crevel in the catastrophe; Hulot sinks beyond rescue in the mire; the sainted Adeline, after oken heart; one after another exposure the rascals, male and female but Bette maintains her mask to the end. " She kept the secret of her hatred through the weary dying anguish of pulmonary consumption; and found supreme satisfaction in seeing Adeline Hortense, Bulot, Victoria, Steinbeck, Celestine children in tears around her bed, considering her the angel of the family." The inspatiatie hatred she has cherished all her lifesince the time when, a child herself, she tried to brilliant imagery, the vigorous and close reason-

disfigure the comely face of Adeline-at last reacts ing, the apt illustration, and the sound Shake upon her, however. "'She will end by being spearean scholarship, which characterize this labor happy,' thought Lisbeth the evening before her of love. It must be said also that the positions death, as she noticed the veneration which the of Mr. Massey are thoroughly sane and reasonbaron showed for his wife . . . The sight hastened able, that he strains no point to strengthen his Bette's end; and her coffin was followed by the case, but that known fact and plausible sugwhole family in tears." She dies implacable, ungestion fit together with the most striking and repentant, sorry for no evil committed, regretful harmonious results. only that her schemes, so cunningly contrived, have somehow miscarried. It is an awful picture,

but it is emphatically a work of genius. forced by a number of subordinate studies, of the type of the opulent bourgeois, luxurious but calculating, vulgar to the core, hiding in his heart aspirations-if they may be so termed-which only emphasize his coarseness and animalism; characterized by that kind of cynical, hard good humor a perfectly natural and genuine type, nothing extenuated, and perhaps in few particulars exaggerated. Another life-like study is that of Wenceslas, the young sculptor who has the gift of design, but lacks the enthusiasm and the industry to execute his inventions. Balzae has dissected this genius manque with characteristic precision and insight, and the observations upon art which accompany it are of themselves well deserving careful meditation. Hortense, Victorin, Celestine, and last though not least, the unhappy Adeline, are drawn with a free hand in bold outlines. But the story is dominated by the Hulot and Bette episodes, and the reader will recur again and again to those unsurpassed creations of tragic power and preternatural grasp of human motives, emotions and influences. It cannot be said that "Consin Bette" is a book for those who like only optimist pre sentations of life. It is a study in morbid patholology; an inquiry into the working of passions and vices, the mischief actually caused by which in all human societies is too patent and too constantly in evidence to be denied or ignored. Balzac was the pupil of Geoffrey Saint-Hilaire and he followed the methods of his master. He must be judged by point of view there can be no hesitation in declar-"Cousin Bette" a most powerful work. It only remains to be said that the present translation by Miss Wormeley is not less admirable than the previous Balzac volumes rendered into such nervous English by that lady.

## SHAKESPEARE'S SONNETS.

GERALD MASSEY'S ANALYSIS.

This new edition of Mr. Massey's work has been largely rewritten, and is now presented in what the author considers its final form. It is a labofies his vice. "He is no longer a man, but a view, been chiefly created by the complete failhand at the "return of the produgal father"; been found impossible to explain them, save by would have allowed it to be supposed that Hulot | constructing a theory of his life which finds no could approach the centre of morbid action. purely personal theory, it has been found necessary to yielate all probability and to ignore the possess a conscience. All the higher part in him supposing that Shakespeare entertained an unnatural passion for some unknown.

of a mistress, of whom, had she ever existed, the The Marneffe is the second; a wonderful poet must have had every reason for being st repellant figure in the book. For the Mar- world to believe that he deliberately pilloried neffe is frankly wicked, brilliantly vicious, de-ti- himself to all eternity. The lofty and austere tute by nature and training of all doubt, hesita- ethics which breathe from so many of the "Sontion and scruple, employing her seductive arts nets," the elevation of their tone, and the cloistral with a latent sense of professionalism. There is nothing to suggest the idea that Valerie is a failen inventors of these degrading conjectures as preangel. On the contrary, it is made clear that her senting any obstacle to the acceptance of their origin was evil, and that she acts altogether after foul imaginings. Throughout his dramatic works With all her cunning and duplicity, Shakespeare inculcates the highest reverence for woman, the most profound regard for the sancthe hands of a yet more evil principal. She is moved almost like a puppet, this pause to the critics who, bent upon explaining everything rightly or wrongly, deliberately impute to the Poet of the "Sonnets," not only a systematic contempt for marital fidelity, but a oarseness and shamelessness so phenomenal as to account for the cokl-blooded perpetuation of his vilest actions by the debauchee himself. Revolting and inherently incredible as this hypothesis is, however, the fact remains that until Mr. Massey undertook the analysis performed in so exhaustive and masterly a way in these pages no inelligible solution of the mystery of the "Sonnets" had been achieved by any one; and for that reason, and in despair of elucidation on more satisfactory lines, many Shakespeareans no doubt provisionally acrepted the libellous theory re-

> Mr. Massey brings a new one which posse so many recommendations that it can hardly fail to establish itself in the minds of such as are not hopeessly prepossessed. He begins by attacking the received order of arrangement of the " Sonnets," and shows, by internal as well as external evidence, that their chronological sequence as pubfished hitherto is all wrong. By rearranging them in groups, he brings out the first faint indications of a new interpretation. Then he opens his argument in support of the main contention of his thesis: namely, that while some of the Sonnets" are personal, others are dramatic-that is to say, that Shakespeare wrote these latter in personification of others, and that the sentiments expressed are not his own, but those of the persons he is dramatically representing. Without quoting the different classes of "Sonnets," it is of course impossible to convey the weight and significance of this line of argument, but it may be said that he said that as Mr. Massey proceeds in his careful, patient and minute analysis, the reader finds new light breaking in upon him at every step, and the evidence becomes cumulative and cogent to the point of irresistible conviction. The theory is, baldly outlined, that some of the Sonnets" were addressed by Shakepeare to Southampton, and of these (mostly the earlier ones) many are intended to persuade the young Earl to marriage; that the dramatic "Sonnets" relate to the loves of Southampton and Elizabeth Vernon, and to the latter's jealousy and fears of Lady Penelope Rich; that other dramatic "Sonnets" were written for or in relation to William Herbert, Earl of Pembroke; that all the "Sonnets" which are characterized by passion are dramatic; and that all the personal "Sonnets' express those lofty, pure and dignified thoughts which we should expect from Shakespeare, and which correspond fully with his character as known to us through his plays.
>
> The acuteness and skill with which Mr. Massey

works out, reinforces, and gives tangibility to his hypothesis, are remarkable. It may indeed be objected that he has extended his ahalysis so far as to interfere with the effect of his conclusions. On the other hand he has written a text-book and an invaluable work of reference, nor can it be doubted that henceforth whoever proposes a life-long martyrdom, dies at length of a an explanation of the "Sonnets" which conflicts with this will be under paramount obligations to encounter and overthrow Mr. Massey's strong positions, as an indispensable preliminary to the introduction of a new theory. Certainly, the author has built solidly and well, and even such as question the finality of his judgments must admire the honest enthusiasm for Shakespeare's fair fame, the manly indignation against the great poet's speculative detractors, the lambent humor, the keen wit, the flashes of poetic diction, the

Besides the Secret Drama of the "Soumets," the volume contains four interesting and weighty essays: on "Shakespeare's Southampton," These three main lines of development are rein- ney's Stella," "Shakespeare and Bacon," and "The Man Shakespeare and his Private Friends." which several are remarkable. There is Crevel, In the third of these papers, which is a slashing critique of the Baconians and Mr. Donnelly, the tables are turned amusingly upon the latter by a account of the experiences of the blockaded people demonstration of Bacon's borrowings from Shakespeare-for the proof of which the "Promeus," aided by a little chronology, serves admirably, of "A Blockaded Family. which is the natural expression of a vulgar rich Mr. Massey's handsome volume, being now issued man's satisfaction with his surroundings; in short, in a popular edition, will doubtless find its way the shelves of all Shakespeare students, none of whom can afford to dispense with so powerful and interesting an argument for what is certainly the most consistent, homogeneous, and altogether credible solution of the "Sonnets" extant.

# NEW NOVELS.

A STUPID BOOK BY ZOLA.

12mo, pp. 365. D. Appleton & Co.
E. DEVIL'S DIE By Grant Allen. 12mo,
pp. 271. Chicago: T. S. Denison.

There can be no question as to the moral improve-ment in Zola's new novel. "Le Reve" is, in fact, as clean as "La Terre" was dirty. The author apparently felt it necessary to prove that he could write as pure a story as anybody, for a good many people were approaching the conviction that his peculiar kind of realism had so smutched his creative faculty as to incapacitate him for innocent and wholesome "Le Reve" may be regarded as an anthe scientific standard, therefore, and from that | swer to such suspicions; but after all it cannot be regarded as a complete vindication. It is the romance of specialists. By the opinon of any three diof a young girl, brought up as an embroidered in a little house under the wing of a great cathedral. Secluded there, fed upon such food for the imagination as an old book of Catholic legends supover visions of a blooming prince who is to woo and that Fielding is "dirty, duit and coarse" earry her off to his marvellous palace. In effect the prince comes, and he turns out to be a real one, though he wins the girl's love under the masquerade of a painter upon glass employed in cathedral repairs. He is the son of the bishop, enormously rich, and on his side scarcely less dreamy than his sweetheart. Of course the bishop refuses his consent to the match, whereupon Angelique falls into a decline, and being moriband is accepted by the cruel parent? There is a wedding in the cathedral, and the bride dies in her lusband's arms as they are leaving the sacred Nobody is much moved by this event, and cutting himself off from all his habitual aids and retended to be pathetic and celestial and lifted high The book is filled with descriptions intended to be tempts to recort, as it were, verbalisf, have hardly a ling to clear up the difficulties (which some read-But the Hulots do not reform, any more than a records, and which is, moreover, hopelessly in stroke of nature in them, but reflect the exaggerated man recovers from general peresis. They have conflict with any view of his character compati-killed all the influences which might have saved ble with harmony between his personal conduct upon its uncomprehended opposites. A flabby sentithem, or, to speak more precisely, they have and his intellectual works. In order to obtain a mentality, a sham plety, an affected sympathy for mentality, a sham piety, an affected sympathy for nature which at bottom is only an artful but soullass collocation of conventionalisms, characterizes the book. It is impossible not to see that M. Zola feels anything but at home in his fdyille dream. One can almost hear him sighing for the more congenial company of "L' Assummotr"—for the solid realities of the heanel and the stews. Mephistopheles pelted with roses by Proceeding on the same general lines, other the angels who have come to rescue the soul of Faust, from The London Globe.

Somnets' have been interpreted by the invention could scarcely have felt more uncomfortable at the

> Scotch, and less literary and creative, as he grows older. His hast novel—if so it may even with bold licerse be designated—is didactic and plous above aught else, and both the didacticism and the piety are of that peculiar, not to say heterodox kind, which this writer has taught the public to associate with his productions in an especial way. Exactly who the "elect lady" is, the so-called story does not disclose with any near approach to definiteness. The principal charge it is a young pessant farmer named Andrew Ingram, who is too good for this Vanity Falt of a world, and who preaches in season and out of season with a zea and aprosiness hardly to be surpassed by the ordained ministers whose doctrine he contenues. So power ful is his persuasion, however, that a squire's daughter is won by it to propose marriago to him, though the does not happen to be leap year. He, of course, refuses her plously and goes off and marries a serving the content of the propose marriago to him, though the learnt tricks in Wall Street and makes money, and hearnt tricks in Wall Street and makes money, and hearnt stricks in Wall Street and makes money, and hearnt stricks in Wall Street and makes money and hearnt stricks in Wall Street and makes money and hearnt stricks in Wall Street and makes money and hearnt stricks in Wall Street and makes money and hearnt stricks in Wall Street and makes money and hearnt stricks in Wall Street and makes money and hearnt stricks in Wall Street and makes money and hearnt stricks in Wall Street and makes money and hearnt stricks in Wall Street and makes money, and the serve laddes with them. So, over they meet, and as nobody has any fresh ideas in famous of the product of the product of the control of this product of the product of the control of this product of the product of the control of the product of Scotch, and less literary and creative, as he grows older. His last novel-if so it may even with bold license be designated-is didactic and plous above

hospital patient whose physical conditions are such as to forward his research. Later, when married, he falls desperately in love with another woman, and the wicked Begum asserts herself in him again and tempts him to "remove" his poor wife. The result of his attempt is fatal to himself and he disappears, but as it was never intended that his wife should be happy with him this does not matter. There is plenty of adventure and lively movement in the story, and some episodes of American life which reveal a rather curious state of ignorance on Mr. Grant Allen's part. Thus he puts the sage-brush desert belt on the wron side of the Rocky Mountains, and situates a petroleun field in the middle of the alkali plains. His picture of American life are not more realistic than his topo graphical arrangements, and his employment of an earthquake to extinguish a wicked community by en gulfing it in the clapboards, shingles and muslin cellngs of a shanty town can hardly be considered adnissible, since even the great Lisbon earthquak ould have had no appreciable effect upon such buildings unless it caused them to be swallowed down The most interesting person in the story is Dr. Mohammed All, a young Arab, who has received a scientific education and who serves as the deus ex machina in quite a novel and decidedly striking man ner. The novel is eminently readable,

OUEER MENTAL LAZINESS.

QUEER MENTAL LAZINESS.

From The London Spectator.

We doubt if even thoughtful men, apart always from a limited class of experienced and observant teachers, are at all aware of the extent to which many men and more women are swayed by what is really nothing but mental laziness. Numbers of them positively will not apply their minds at all, preferring any consequences which may result from ignorance, and emerge from school as ignorant as fishes; while still larger classes, possibly even a majority, betray the same impulse as regards particular subjects. Men are constantly heard to affirm in confidential moments that they literally "cannot" acquire this or that ordinary branch of knowledge, while they do learn at the very same time things much more difficult, and requiring precisely the same kind of mental especitics. Hundreds of men will profess positive inablity to learn the commonest facts relating to any schede but their own, even when their own is kindred to the one discussed; while thousands of women will calculate accurately all the measurements necessary for a dress, a really difficult process if accuracy is to be attained, and then declare

nderstand rule-of-three, or calculate Mr. Goschen's interest on their own fortunes.

Half the men in the world, who are not sensitive music, think it an impossibility for them to learn o read musical notation, and we have heard a man, or without power of reasoning, and with a special pritude for mental anthmetic, declare that a nonsend years of tultion would not enable him to manyrehend a quadratic equation. Indeed, it is one the proponence of mental axises that it often of the phenomena of mental laziness that it ofte reveals itself in its acutest form in the naturally able.

### LITERARY NOTES.

There is a rumor that the Rev. Edward Everett Hale has in preparation a "Life of Christ."

& Mifflin will soon publish the book under the title

Mr. Stockton's last book, "Amos Kilbright," has already gone into its second edition.

becan," are, it is to be supposed, not specially important scraps, as they were written during the course of his long life at occasional moments not only in notebooks, but on odd bits of paper, old envelopes, prospectus backs, etc., all of which he carefully preserved. This miscellaneous heap of odes and strophes, of epic and chanson, and versicle, sometimes of two rhymling words only, as "Eloa," and "Boa," will

LE REVE. Par Emile Zola. Paris: G. Charpentier et Cie. New-York: W. R. Jenkins.

THE DREAM. By Emile Zola. Translated by Ende Zola. Translated by enterprise that Eastern publishers did not care to bring out the book. The Western men are more adventurous. Everybody who did not read "Yone" in "The Atlantic" will be curious to see what has caused so much excitement.

A ghostly thing, which was also jolly, once happened to Mrs. Fremont, and she has written about it for the Christmas "Wide-Awake."

George Moore, the author of several rather un pleasant novels, wants a new system of criticism, and would like all literature to come under the judgment tinguished living men of letters he would be content to abide. An irreverent fellow-countryman suggests that Mr. Moore has forgotten his literary history as an old book of Catholic legends supis, without youthful society and witheducation, Angelique naturally falls into an unnaturally romantic and dreamy state, and broods Lad read it? What of R. L. Stevenson, who finds man of genius," says Mr. Moore's friend, "is a very

> Mr. Arlo Bates's new novel, "The Philistines," is coming from the press of Ticknor & Co. It deals among other things with legislative lobbying.

> The distinguished Oriental scholar and Biblical specialist, Dr. Robert Young, has just died in his sixty-sixth year. His "Analytical Concordance of

> the Bible" is known all over the world.

through Ticknor & Co. a volume of poems. He has Mr. W. H. Rossetti's forthcoming volume on his brother, Dante Gabriel Rossetti, is neither biography nor criticism. It merely presents a number of details about the poet and his work, set forth in narrative form. "The Athenseum" says that the plan of the book will stand pretty nearly as follows: 1. of the successive years: 2. The account of the literary works, similarly arranged; 3. A prose paraphrase of the successive years: 2. The account of the literary works, similarly arranged; 3. A prose paraphrase of the successive years: 2. seem to consider formidable) in the diction and structure of these poems-a performance of mere paraphrastic exposition, not of biographical or critical comment; 4. Some additional or tabular matter regard-

could scarcely have felt more uncomfortable at the impact of the Paradisaical blossoms than does the author of "La Terre" in the company of the preternaturally good people introduced in this tale. In itself, the story is perfectly proper and decorous, but it has no spontaneity, and it is but too apparent that the author's heart was not in his work when he wrote it. The translation into English is fairly well done, but the illustrations to the American edition are aboutinably bad.

Mr. George Macdonald becomes more evanyelically Scotch, and less literary and creative, as he grows francs for the journey."

"Will you not move?"

"No."

## IMITATION CHINESE HALL VASES.

From The Boston Advertiser.

It is said that Chinese hall vases and kindred briea-brae are now made in this country. It is said that Chinese hall vases and kindred brica-brac are now made in this country, and answer decorative purposes just as well as the imported article. One with an eye for such things would need to see these native imitations, and have their nativity voched for before quite accepting the report that they were as good in effect as the imported. But if they can pass muster at all it may, perhaps, explain the predictions number of such things now in the market. The stores are filled, every auction room is crowded; in short, they meet the eye with the frequency almost of the fruit stands at street corners. But the rugs! These Oriental poems in needlework are almost as frequent, and yet we function the success.

She had been hanging around the library for some time, but seemed timid about going up to the desk and making known her wants. Finally, when the room was cleared of applicants for a moment, she stilled up and whispered to the librarian: "Say! Have you got 'Pope's Essay on Man?"—(Burlington Free Press.

PETABLISHED 1849.

Silverman

IMPORTERS AND MANUFACTURERS OF

Retailed at Wholesale Prices.

12 EAST 18TH-ST.

### DOWN SOUTH.

RISTUS LEADS THE WAY.

Limestone Township, Nov. 1. The woman who entertained us in her cabin had complimented us on "doin' mighty well at our eatin's," and we deserved the remark. Now that we were no longer hungry, it seemed a mystery that we could have devoured so much "hog and hominy." It was our "sleepin's" that next began to occupy our minds. The sun was down behind that double mountain which is named the "Twin Brothers"; still we were

assured that it wouldn't be dark "fur quite a spell," and the woman "war lookin' fur Ristus right soon." But the phrase "right soon" conveyed dismal ideas to us. Had not Alick been promised right soon? Had we come to North Carolina that we might spend our lives in waiting for different boys? What reason had we to hope that Ristus would be more prompt than Alick had been? It was dreadful to have our fate in the hands of a boy named Ristus, who was

expected right soon.
But Providence, having frowned, was now about to smile. We were hovering over the fire when our hostess, coming in with a load of wood, remarked as she flung it down, that she "reckoned she seen Ristus er comin' urp the ole field now; but she hoped we could wait till he'd had his eatin's, fur ole man

Penland worked him like 'er slave." We went to the door to look for our deliverer. Yes, up the slope, where young pines were springing, there was something moving slowly. Could that be the boy? It was something which were a long garment reaching to within a few inches of the ground, so near the ground that the wearer was holding it up in front as he climbed the hill. The head was

Covered by a sun-bonnet.

The woman stood behind us and she raised her "Be er pickin' urp yer needles, Ristus; here be er

job fur yer." The object heard the words, it increased its speed, thereby nearly falling into the skirts of the garment.
We now discovered a fall, stalwart boy in an army
overcoat, from which the cape had gone. The skirts of the coat were sewed together with twine in front and rear, thus restricting the wearer's steps to a very short stride indeed. We were soon convinced that this was the only article of apparel which Ristus wore, if we except his sun-bonnet. He was barefooted. It was a mild day, mild enough to be comfortable without shoes, and to be uncomfortable with an army

overcoat on.

When he came still nearer we could see large darm here and there, darns made with twine, not beautiful, but effective.

We had a passing glimpse of his face as he went by us into the house, but the sun-bonnet immediately obscured him again. He remained thus covered while swallowed his supper. Amabel asked him if he knew where Mr. Ayer lived. The sun-bonnet ne knew where Mr. Ayer lived. The sun-bonnet nodded an affirmative. She next inquired if he would guide us there before dark, and there was another nod. It was, perhaps, something like having an interview with the Man in the Iron Mask. Certainly it was fully as mysterious. The nods had been so reassuring that our spirits began to rise. We felt that it was better to have Ristus whom we could not see, than Alick whom we had seen too much. We began to feel a stimulating effect from the very fact that we could Mr. Charles H. Webb (John Paul) is about to publish not see him. From the Man in the Iron Mask, our wandered to the beauties of the East who shroud themselves from vulgar curiosity. We dared not try to get directly in front of Ristus; we thought our motive in so doing would be too apparent. And it is only from the front that the wearer of a sun-bonnet may be seen. Pone and bacon disappeared within the depths of that bonnet, but no sound of a voice came from it until the woman asked:

"Ole Penland ben curttin' urp rough ter day,

"Torrable rough." "Why don't yer git ketched of him "

" Carnt." After that there was no more conversation, and no sound save the crackling of the fire, and the crunching of Ristus's teeth on corn bread in the

remote depths of the bennet.

The twilight was coming on. We knew there would be no moon. Again Mr. Ayer's grew far away. Suddenly, with the effect of stopping in the middle of a meal, the figure fastened into that long robe rose to its feet, and from the sun-bonnet came the words:

FReckon yo' ladies 'll be fur mekin 'er soon start." We were instantly on our feet, Amabel with the bird cage and a satchel, I with more satchels.

"The sooner the better," we said eagerly.

But eagerness is thrown away among these people.

They are made in a way which makes it impossible for them to understand rapidity of thought or motion. We had supposed Histus was going to start. he stood slouching in front of the fire, the strangest combination of the pathetic and the ludierous in his blaze, and two very dirty hands were held outward.

We remained standing, laden as we were.

"They's er waitin', Ristus," at last said the woman "and night's er curmin' on, Ristus."

I was about to say that the boy started, but that word hints at something more rapid than the move-ment which propelled him from the fire toward the door, through which could be seen the vast profiles of the mountains, now growing a dark purple against the violet western sky.

He did not turn toward us, but we, thinking he had started for Mr. Ayer's, followed with our impediments. We had not gone many rods before we became painfully aware that the bags were too much for us. We called to our guide. He came with his head held in such a way that the broad side of his bonnet was presented to us. Without a word, he picked up a stick from the path, slung two bags upon it, and took the third in his hand, the two swinging from his shoulder. We followed as lightly as possible with our redbird.

The gloom on this wooded mountain path grew rapidly deeper, but our guide strode on without pause. Once, from a side path, a man on horseback came slowly loping. He drew in his rein. "Howdy, Ristus," he said, "what ye got!"

" Women," answered Ristus, and then the horseman went on.

The steeper the way, the easier the boy seemed to go. At length I began to think that something mysterious had secured control of us. We should probably follow in this way along a mountain side all the rest of our lives. It was always to be dim, with glimpses of stars through the trees; always there would be in front of us a magnified figure in an army overcoat and a cape bonnet. This figure would for ever be walking in the same peculiar way, lifting its feet high, because of climbing mountains for years.

For the first time since we had left Asheville
Junction, I wished I was back there. I thought with longing of the boarding-house sitting-room and its three beds. We should never see a bed again; never see any being but the one which we were following and we had not even seen him

Amabel managed to ask, breathlessly, "if it was far now?"

"Ruther near," said the unsaen. Did "ruther near" mean a few rods or a few miles? Suddenly, without the slightest premonitory sign that he was going to speak, Ristus said, with indescribable contempt in his voice;

" Mr. Ayer be er man ez think; we uns don't plough deep enurf. He's er ben er ploughin' deeper. I reckon his craps 'll be er sight; they be er sight, anyhow." We could think of nothing to say to this informaion; and we had no breath to speak if we could have

thought of a suitable reply.

In less than five minutes more we came to a clearing, stoping upward, and at a distance there was the shining of a light, as if from a house. A few more steps, and there was a rush of something coming polinell down the hill toward us, then a barking in several different keys.

Ristus stopped, and we stopped close behind him. There were voices from the direction of the house. The purple lights of the heavens were all gone now. ed in the night, but how mild, and yet how exhilarating the air was! Not like a night in late The boy put his hand to the side of his mouth and

shouted: " Dogs bite?"

The answer came down, " No; come on."

warded us. He was certainly the most ungrateful redbird with whom I was ever acquainted.

We went on up the hill. When Ristus called out
"Thar's women hyar," we saw a woman join the
man, and both hastened down. She told him she
would give him another dollar if he would go down
to the junction and see that Alick found the way to
his surrey. On hearing these words, Mr. Ayer laquired if it were Ahick's surrey that was
standing out there below his potato field. He said
it was not customary for him to find a surrey in
his woods, but he had found one just before dark.
It was dreadful to know after all our suffering that
we had been actually on the Ayer farm in our most
despairing moments. So near, and yet so far. The
woman who had fed us had not lived in that cabin long,
or she would have known how near to the Ayers'
house that surrey was left.

Ristus accompanied us into the cabin, a plank house
of two rooms and four windows; quite an aristocravio
dwelling. Ristus was offered supper. He said "he
reckoned he wouldn't set to thur table with us, but
he'd take er bite by thur fire, of they war or mine
ter."

They proved to be "er mine ter," and the boy, still
in his sun-bonnet, a'e so many plates of chicken and

They proved to be "er mine ter," and the boy, still in his sun-bonnet, a'e so many plates of chicken and sweet potatoes that we became alarmed. There was a dog each side of him and one in front; they all had sweet potators that we became alarmed. There was a dog each side of him and one in front; they all had bones galore. The firelight shore on the group, but again I was so placed, or Ristus was so placed, that I could not see his face. I began to feel superstitious. If this boy had a face, it seemed to me that I could not be happy without seeing it. I was about to plead openly for that privilege, when he rose, set his empty plate down to the dogs, and, without speaking, walked out of the house.

A few moments later Amabel presented the birdeage to her friend, and explained the rather self-evident fact that the bird was not in it.

But it was a beautiful creature, she said, enthusiastically, "and has been the cause of much amiability in us and others all through the journey. I may say it has been a means of discipline."

The door opened. The head-covering of Ristus was thrust in, and the voice of Ristus asked:

"Whar be thur quints?"

"They are visiting at their aunt's, on Busbee," replied Mrs. Ayer.

The door closed again.

Amabel said that she should continue to try to be reconciled to the belief that she should never look upon the face of Ristus, but it was too much to expect her to continue in ignorance of the nature of "quints." Might she ask what were "quins." A breed of dogs, perhaps? But, no—that could hardly bo.

Mrs. Ayer laughed, but she looked troubled.

be. Mrs. Ayer laughed, but she looked troubled.

"Ristus meant twins," she said. "It is his peculiarity to call them as you heard. He must know better; no one else speaks of them thus. He is a strange boy. Perhaps you can make something of Orestes. He has an ideally beautiful head."

"Then you have seen his head?" inquired Amabel, quickly, "and his name is Orestes?"

Mrs. Ayer nodded, and left that subject, going on to say:

Mrs. Ayer nodded, and left that subject, going on to say:

"You did not know that we had taken poor white twin girls to 'raisa.' Wait till you see them. Eleven years old. Unadulterated poor white stock. They will be over to morrow or the next day. They are crazy to see the company we were expecting. They puzzle me." The spealour sighed heavily. "If you need more than Ristus and the 'quins' to occupy your mind, then your mind is of wast extent. Why does Ristus, who is here a dozen times a week, and whom the dogs love more than they love us, always stop down there below the melon patch, and scream at the top of his lungs to know if the dogs bite! Some one always has to go out and shout back that they don't bite. But that is a trifling problem, I acknowledge. It is a wearing one, however, when you have to contend with it daily. One time I asked him why he did thus, and requested him to discontinue the habit. He replied that that 'war thur way ter do, and he assured me that it was a way he 'reckoned he should keep urp.' Have you heard that we-uns plough too deep? Yes, I thought you would hear of that. Well," as if trying to shake of irritating memories, "there's one thing we do have here in perfection, and that is scenery."

## NOTES ON CURRENT ART.

THE VERESTCHAGIN EXHIBITION - NEW PAINTINGS AND PRINTS.

The Tribune has announced the appointment of Mr. Rush C. Hawkins as the commissioner in charge of the American department of fine arts at the Paris Exposition of 1889. This appointment may be re-Exposition to mean the beginning of active efforts for an adequate representation of American are at Paris. Various failures in the past render it of the more consequence that the coming international expisition should present to the world the best work which American actists have done of recent years. Such an exhibition would help American art at home and abroad, and it is to be hoped that the artists felly appreciate the importance of the opportunity. Cirulars are soon to be issued by the commissioner, furnishing detailed information.

The paintings of Vassill Verestchagin will be placed leries. There will be a private view on Thursday next. Various rugs, hangings and examples of jewelry and arms will be shown together with the paintings, and these mementoes of travel will probably increase popular interest in the exhibition. Verestchagin's last exhibition in London the star-cases and doorways were hung with Eastern rugs and carpets, and there were groups of weapons mounted on shields, glazed tiles from the Mosque of Omar, prayer-wheels from Taibet, pipes made of human bones, arms used in the Turco-Russian War, Eastern images and cups from Buddhist temples. In addition to the curios at the Lordon exhibition there figure and attitude. He shifted his weight from one foot to another, his head-covering bent toward the cuttings, and pamphlets, portraits and caricatness and author. No example of M. Verestchagin's work has been seen in this country, but whatever opinion may be formed concerning his art, it may be safely predicted that his exhibition will prove a popular success. setting forth the claims of the exhibitor as painted

Verestchagin literature is likely to be as plentiful as was Munkaesy literature two years since, but it may be useful to recapitulate the chief incidents of an adventurous and a productive career. M. Verest chagin was born in the Province of Novgorod in 1842, and was educated for the navy. But he studied art while attending the naval school, and at the age of seventeen devoted himself entirely to painting. He had already visited London and Paris, and a year later he made a journey to the Cancasus, publishing an account of his travels, illustrated by himself, in the "Tour du Monde." In 1864 he entered Gereme' atelier in Paris, and for the next two or three years he worked at the Beaux Arts. In 1867 Russia sent an army into Central Asia to punish th marauding Turcomans, and General Kauffman invited Verestchagin to accompany him. The army penetrated to Samarcand, which was besteged and captured. In the course of a desperate attempt to recapture the city Verestchagin gained the cross of St. George by his bravery in rallying the Russian garrison after the officers had been disabled. The material gathered in this expedition was "worked up" in the next two years in Munich, where the artist painted his "Tomb of Tameriane," "The Dervishes," and " Emir Inspecting the Heads of the Slain." india, where he found a variety of material for pictorial treatment, ranging from the temple of India and caves of Eilora to the entrance of the Prince of Wales into Jeypore. In the course of this journey he visited the Ilimalayas and Thibet. Soon after his return came the breaking out of the Turco-Russian war. Verestchagin was wounded while on a torpedo boat on the Danube, but he recovered in witness the scenes at Plevna and the Shipka Pass. Upon the experiences of that terrible campaign he has based a series of paintings probably the best known of his pictures of this war. Afterward Verestchagin settled himself in a home at Maisons Laffitte, near Paris, where he built a studio of most imposing dimensions. His pictures have been eximposing dimensions. In pictures have both to hitted from time to time in various European capitals. The artist visited Palestine and undertook the "realistic" painting of religious subjects, an ambition rebuked by the Archbishop of Vienna, as some of our readers may remember. It is understood that the paintings of scenes in the life of Christ are not to be shown in the coming exhibition.

A collection of paintings by Mr. George Henry Hall has been placed on exhibition at the Fifth Avenue Art Galleries. The collection includes several paintings of the Roman peasantry, the results of a recent visit to Italy, and many examples of the fruit and flower paintings to which the artist has given especial attention. In addition to various landscapes and compositions with figures, Mr. Hall exhibits several of his copies of paintings by the "old masters," and a sixteenth century copy of the Danae of Titian, and a sixteenth century copy of the Lana of Internation in the museum of Naples. Among the copies by Mr. Itali is one of Rubens's "Education of the Virgin." In the Antwerp Museum. Those who attend the exhibitions of the National Academy have long been familiar with the work of Mr. Itali, and the present opportunity will doubtless be improved. The sale will be held on Thursday evening next.

The schools of the National Academy of Design have been fortunate in obtaining the services of Mr. Olin L. Warner, who will take charge of the class in

The answer came down, "No; come on."

The same voice called the dogs stronuously, "Buster! Tip! Bull! you rascals!"

The dogs did not obey in the least. They were now dashing around us with such celerity as to seem half a dozen in number. We had recognized Mr. Ayer's voice. In the hurried movement which this recognition stimulated, Amabel fell forward directly on the bird-cage, which yielded in such a way that, for the second time wilhin twenty-four hours, the bird flew out. This time he did not escape into a grocery store, but into the wild woods. I will now finish the history of this particular redbird so far as I know it. We never saw him again. We had brought him up from Florida at the risk of permanently souring the tempers of both of us. During the journey we half sacrificed for him our liberty and the pursuit of happiness. This was the way he re-Although new paintings are for the most part held